

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ROME 11775 191800Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00
PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 /030 W
-----117844 191936Z /53

R 191703Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5976
INFO AMCONSUL MILAN
AMCONSUL NAPLES
AMCONSUL FLORENCE
AMCONSUL GENOA
AMCONSUL PALERMO

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS:PINT, IT
SUBJECT: RUMORS GROW OF MOVE TO POSTPONE ADMINISTRATIVE ELECTIONS

1. PRESS STORIES AND LOCAL CONTACTS SUGGEST THAT A MOVE IS AFOOT TO POSTPONE THE LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE ELECTIONS SCHEDULED FOR THIS NOVEMBER. IF HELD ACCORDING TO SCHEDULE, THE ELECTIONS WOULD INVOLVE APPROXIMATELY TEN PERCENT OF THE TOTAL ELECTORATE AND WOULD BE THE LARGEST ELECTORAL TEST SINCE THE JUNE 1976 NATIONAL ELECTIONS.

2. THE OSTENSIBLE REASON FOR THE DELAY IS ALLEGEDLY GROWING AGREEMENT AMONG THE LEADERS OF THE VARIOUS POLITICAL PARTIES OF THE ADVISABILITY OF HOLDING ADMINISTRATIVE ELECTIONS ONLY ONCE EVERY YEAR INSTEAD OF SPREADING THEM THROUGHOUT THE YEAR AS UNDER CURRENT PRACTICE. ONE PROPOSAL CURRENTLY BEING MENTIONED IS TO HOLD THOSE ADMINISTRATIVE ELECTIONS REQUIRED EACH YEAR ON A SUNDAY BETWEEN THE MIDDLE OF APRIL AND THE MIDDLE OF JUNE WHICH WOULD FOLLOW THE PRACTICE ESTABLISHED BY THE CONSTITUTION FOR THE HOLDING OF
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NATIONAL REFERENDA.

3. THE REAL IMPETUS FOR THE CURRENT TALK, HOWEVER, IS APPARENTLY POLITICAL. ALL SIGNS INDICATE THAT FOR DIVERSE REASONS FEW OF THE NATION'S POLITICAL LEADERS FAVOR THE HOLDING OF ADMINISTRATIVE ELECTIONS THIS NOVEMBER BECAUSE OF THE DANGER OF DISRUPTING

THE FRAGILE POLITICAL BALANCE ACHIEVED FOLLOWING COMPLETION OF THE PROGRAMMATIC ACCORD. CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC (DC) LEADERS, WHO REPORTEDLY HAVE HOPES OF THEIR PARTY DOING WELL AT THE POLLS, SEE THE CAMPAIGN LEADING UP TO THE ELECTIONS AND THE POSSIBLE FAVORABLE RESULTS AS LEADING TO INTER-PARTY POLEMICS WHICH COULD THREATEN THE LIFE OF THE ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT. AT THE SAME TIME SOME DC LEADERS ARE CONCERNED ABOUT AN EARLY ELECTORAL TEST IN TRIESTE WHERE THE PARTY IS BEARING THE BRUNT OF THE CRITICISM FOR THE OSIMO ACCORD.

4. HAVING SEEN THE RESULTS OF THE CASTELLAMARE DI STABIA AND CAPUA ELECTIONS, COMMUNIST LEADERS REPORTEDLY WOULD PREFER TO GIVE THEMSELVES MORE TIME TO CONSOLIDATE THEIR GAINS OF 1975 AND 1976 BEFORE GOING TO AN ELECTORAL TEST WHICH WOULD BE VIEWED AS A REFERENDUM ON THEIR POLITICAL STRENGTH. ADDITIONALLY, THEY TOO WOULD PREFER TO AVOID A DIRECT CONFRONTATION WITH THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS WHICH HARD FOUGHT LOCAL ELECTIONS COULD CREATE. THE SMALLER PARTIES REPORTEDLY HAVE MIXED THOUGHTS ABOUT THE IDEA OF A DELAY WITH THE SOCIALISTS FEELING THAT IT WOULD PROVIDE MORE TIME TO REBUILD THE PARTY WHILE SOME SOCIAL DEMOCRATS ARE SUGGESTING THAT ELECTIONS IN NOVEMBER WOULD INDICATE A RECOVERY IN THE PARTY'S ELECTORAL FORTUNES.

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5. AT THIS JUNCTURE THE MAJOR OPPOSITION TO DELAYING THE ELECTIONS COMES FROM LOCAL OFFICIALS. THEY ARGUE THAT THE PERIOD LEADING UP TO LOCAL ELECTIONS IS CHARACTERIZED BY GROWING PARALYSIS OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT. FOR THOSE AREAS SCHEDULED TO VOTE IN NOVEMBER, THIS PARALYSIS HAS ALREADY SET IN, AND THUS A DELAY UNTIL NEXT SPRING WOULD ONLY PROLONG THIS PROCESS.

6. IN THE EVENT THIS NOVEMBER'S ADMINISTRATIVE ELECTIONS ARE NOT HELD UNTIL NEXT SPRING, THE TOTAL NUMBER OF VOTERS GOING TO THE POLLS AT THAT TIME WOULD BE APPROXIMATELY TEN MILLION OR 28 PERCENT OF THE ELECTORATE.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS, ALLEGATIONS, AMENDMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 19-Jul-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977ROME11775
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770268-1010
Format: TEL
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770742/aaaabkle.tel
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Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
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Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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Retention: 0
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Review Exemptions: n/a
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